

I NEED A CONTRACTOR...

WHAT DO I DO NOW???



Get Recommendations!

- Friends, family, and neighbors can tell you about their customer experience
- Internet – A simple search of the internet and social media can turn up articles and reviews, positive or negative.
- Your insurance company may have a preferred list.
- The Better Business Bureau
- State licensing agencies can verify trade licenses and track serious complaints.

Ask the right questions:

- Will they give references?
- What is their timeline for starting/finishing the project?
- Do they use subcontractors? Who?
- Do they have insurance, including coverage for employee injuries on the job?

Get multiple bids, and beware of any bid that's significantly lower than the others.

Present a written scope of work detailing what you expect.

Pick someone who specializes in the type of work you're seeking.

Get written estimates that itemize parts and labor.

Determine a payment schedule. Contractors generally expect at least 10% up front, or at least enough to cover initial material purchases. Withhold final payment until you are fully satisfied with the work and it has passed all City inspections. ***Never pay 100% up front.***

Make sure your contractor gets a building permit (if required) and passes the final inspection. You can check with the City to verify. If the contractor fails to obtain a permit or pass inspection, it may fall back on

Put everything in writing.

Ask to see their professional license (if any) and insurance.

Hire local – Verify that the contractor has a local, physical address.

Go with your gut – You have to be comfortable with this person in your house.

CONTRACTOR LICENSING & REGISTRATION

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CONTRACTOR IS THE REAL DEAL?



Plumbers, electricians, and HVAC contractors must be licensed by the State of Texas. All types of contractors must be registered with the City of Coppell.

Why should I look for a licensed contractor?

- For a tradesman to achieve a Master-level trade license, it takes years of experience and training, and binds the licensee to a code of conduct that includes both technical skill and businesses practices.
- Only licensed contractors can obtain required building permits from the City.

How can I tell if my contractor is licensed by the State?

- Ask them to show you their license. Note the number, type, and expiration date.
- Plumbers, electricians, and HVAC contractors are required under licensing law to display their trade license number on all of their company vehicles, advertisements, and business documents.
- Search for them by name or license number online to verify.

For more information on contractor licensing, see the links below:

- Plumbing – Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (www.tsbpe.texas.gov)
- Electricians – Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (www.tdlr.texas.gov)
- HVAC – Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (www.tdlr.texas.gov)

Does the City of Coppell check contractors' credentials?

- Yes. Contractors of all kinds who pull permits in Coppell have to register with the City on an annual basis. When a contractor applies for registration, the City verifies their required State licensing and that they have liability insurance (\$1 million coverage per occurrence). The City cannot recommend one contractor over another, but the City verifies their credentials and inspects their work.